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MIKI

THE BOOK OF
MAUD AND MISKA PETERSHAM

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN & COMPANY INC.
GARDEN CITY ★ NEW YORK ★ 1934

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MIKI AND SÄRI AND MATYI

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MIKI

MIKI

THIS is a picture of a little boy whose name was Miki.

One day he heard his father talking to a man, whom he called "Szalabasci." They were talking about a place named Hungary. That was a funny word—Hungary. But still it was a real name of a real place.

At last Miki found the place on the map.

It looked so far off, but he wanted to go there. So he did.

He went on a boat, and on a train and another train. At last when he got off the train it was night.

All he could see were stars. Stars were everywhere.

He was all alone.

At the bottom of the picture you can see some little lights. Miki saw these, too, and he said:

"Maybe those are not stars, but lights from people's houses." So he walked in the direction of the lights.

He was right. The lights came from the windows of some funny little houses.

First he peeked in one of the windows. Then he knocked on the door.

Then he went into one of the houses and found a nice kind old man and a very fat smiling old woman. Both of them sat with their backs against a white-washed clay stove, like this:

Miki sat down between them and warmed his back, too.

He felt happy and warm—and so sleepy! He yawned and nodded and rocked from side to side.

Then the old woman took him by the hand and led him to a bed. Miki rubbed his eyes and looked.

He asked, "Do you call this a bed? I never saw one like this."

The old woman was surprised and said, "Yes, this is a bed—a beautiful bed. In fact, it is my very best bed. You can sleep here."

Miki was sleepy but he did not see how he could possibly climb to the top of that bed. And there was hardly any space left on top, for the bed went almost up to the ceiling.

You would not have known what to do, either.

Miki stood and looked.

First there was a high curtained place, as high as Miki's head. On top of this were big fat feather pillows, all piled neatly on end, one beside the other. On top of these was another row of very fat pillows. Then there was still another row—way, way up, almost to the ceiling. These pillows were not the plain white kind Miki had at home. They were all embroidered in lovely colors, red and pink and blue and yellow and black.

Where in all this pile of pillows was he supposed to sleep? He stood and thought what he had better do and where he should begin to climb.

How funny it would seem to sleep on top of all those pillows!

A MIKI LÁDIKÁJA

The old woman was so excited about showing Miki her beautiful best bed that she didn't realize how tired he was. When she saw him standing there so forlorn and so sleepy she quickly drew the curtain aside and pulled out four fat pillows. This left a space for Miki to sleep. She put back one little pillow for his head and one long flat one to cover him.

He pulled off his sweater and his trousers and shoes and climbed in. It was the softest, warmest place he had ever slept in.

MORNING

OMETHING woke Miki up. It was quite early in the morning. He climbed out of his pillow bed, ran over to a window and looked out.

There he saw a square all paved with round stones like biscuits. Houses were all around the square, and many streets led into it, with low whitewashed houses all the way down those streets.

No one was in sight except one tall, tall man standing in the center of the square. He was blowing a loud blast from a great curved horn.

He was a herdsman. Every morning he took all the cows of the valley out to the pasture where they could find juicy green grass to eat. All day he stayed out with them, and at night brought them back to the village.

Miki leaned way out of the window to look at him. The herdsman had a long black moustache. His long white trousers looked like a full petticoat, all embroidered. He had shiny black boots and a little hat with a bunch of flowers in it. A great heavy white felt coat embroidered in black and red hung from his shoulders like a cape. He had a long horn in one hand and a whip in the other.

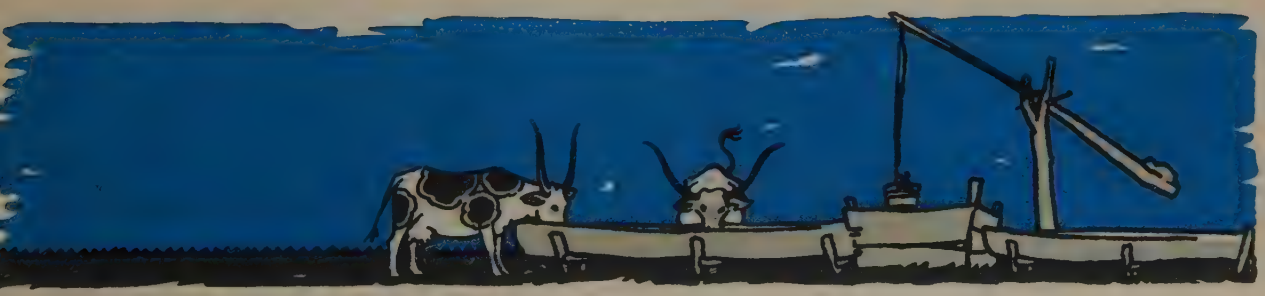
The herdsman blew his horn again—a long clear call.

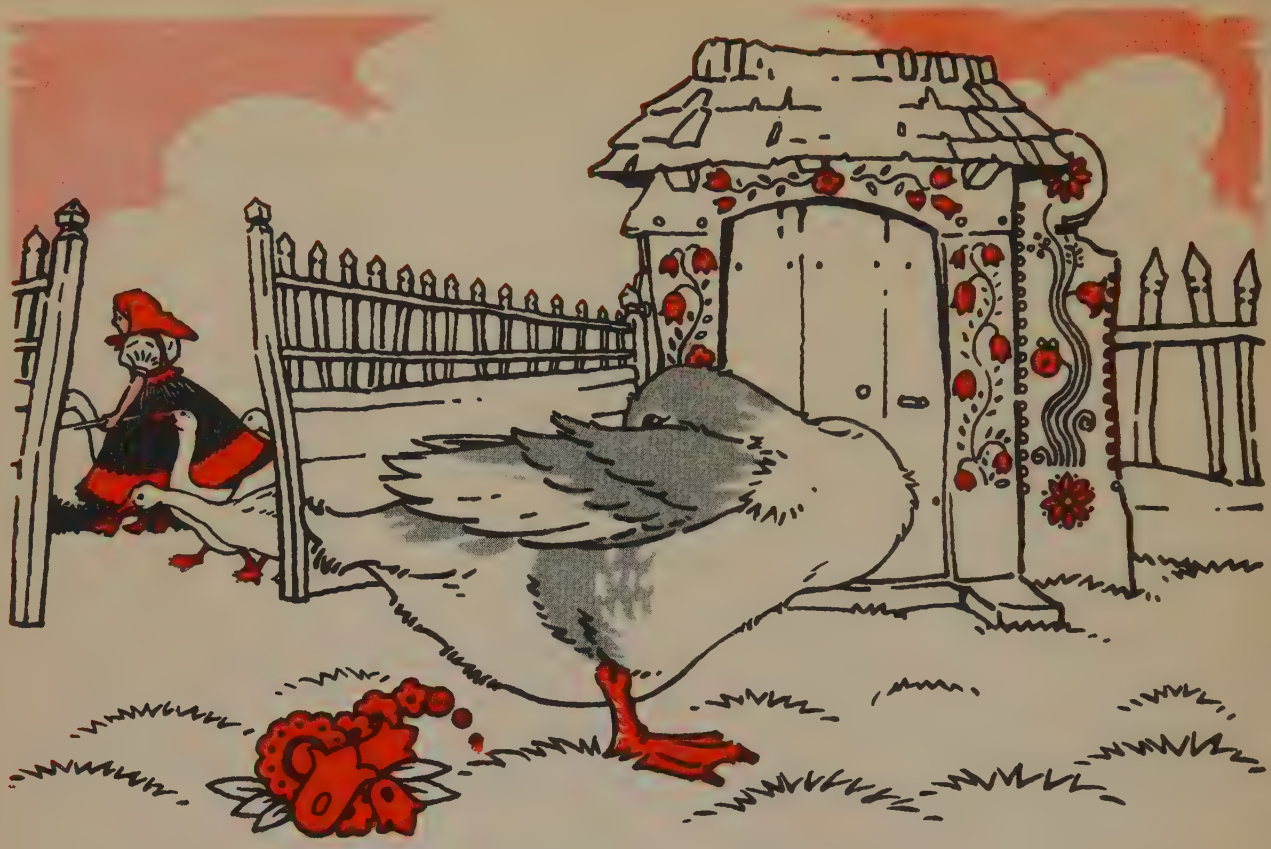
Now Miki saw something very strange. Out of each open gate in front of each little house came a cow with big beautiful curved horns. Down each street solemnly marched a whole procession of cows. They all came straight to the herdsman and stood waiting near him. Finally the square was full of cows. Then the herdsman cracked his long whip in the air and made a loud noise like a pistol shot. The cows and the man started off toward the pasture, in a cloud of dust from all the tramping feet.

Miki was so interested in watching them go that he did not hear the old woman call him. When he turned back from the window, there she was with her arms full of clothes, just like the ones which the herdsman had worn, only much smaller.

He had lots of trouble getting the clothes on. The trousers had no buttons, only a string, which pulled through all the gathers and tied.

At last he was dressed and ready for the day.





THE SHEPHERDS

MIKI heard the old woman scolding in the courtyard. He hurried out to see what it was all about.

The old woman was very cross and was saying, "Sari, Sari, you lazy goose." (The way she said "Sari" sounded as if it were spelled "Shari.") A big fat green goose with her head still under her wing stood looking out of one black beady eye. The goose was still very sleepy.

"Why didn't you go with Rosika?" said the old woman to the goose.

Miki said: "Who is Rosika?"

The old woman told him that Rosika was the little goose girl who took the geese out each morning to find fresh green grass on the plain. The old woman had opened the gate early so that Sari could go out of the yard by herself when Rosika called. This morning Sari had been sleepy, and Rosika and all the geese had gone off without her.

The old woman was so upset that Miki said, "Let me take Sari and find some green grass; please, please."

The old woman was glad and said, "Yes." So Miki and Sari started off.

Sari said "I know the way."

But she didn't.

They wandered about for a long time but could not find Rosika and her geese. All day they walked about.

At last they saw smoke and a camp fire. The big sun was just dropping off the edge of the plain. In front of the fire two shepherds were cooking their supper, and the supper smelled good.

When it was finished they poured it all into one large dish. The old shepherd put the dish upon a funny little low table. He pulled up a three-legged stool and sat down.

He had a wooden spoon and gave another one to Miki. Miki tasted—it was soup, the best soup he had ever eaten. It was made of sauerkraut. They all ate from one large bowl. First the old man had a spoonful, then the young shepherd, then Miki.

Close to the young shepherd sat a dog named Matyi. Long silvery curls hung down in his eyes and made him look very untidy. He was all covered with curls.

After they had eaten all they wanted the shepherd took off his hat and poked in the top of the crown until it looked like a bowl. Miki watched and wondered what he was going to do with it. The shepherd told him he was going to give Matyi some supper, too. Very carefully he poured all of the soup that was left into the crown of his hat. He explained to Miki that soup was good for his hat because soup helped to make it waterproof. Besides, the hat made a fine bowl for Matyi. He

put it down on the ground in front of Matyi. Matyi licked up every drop. Then the shepherd picked up his hat, straightened it into shape again, and put it back on his own head.

After supper they all sat around the fire. The shepherds were talking, the old man to the young one. Miki sat up very straight and listened to each word. The old man told marvelous stories, stories of brave men

who rode horses faster than the wind. Then the shepherds looked up at the Milky Way in the sky, all full of stars and called it the trail of the dead warriors. Long, long before, a few people had been left there by their king while he had to ride with some of his warriors far, far back to the land they had come from. But he promised to come whenever his people needed help. They did need help very soon, for they were living with enemies all about them, fighting them. Three times the King came with his warriors when they needed him. But one year their enemies were attacking them and destroying

them. The people wanted their King so very, very much—without his help they would all die. They expected him and waited for him, but he did not come. Their King had died in the land far off where he had gone. One night as they watched for him, they heard over their heads in the sky the sound of the hoofs of racing horses and the rattling of swords and spears. The spirit of their King and of his warriors had come to save them. The enemy heard and saw the warriors in the sky. They were terribly frightened, threw down their weapons, and left the people in peace.

The horsemen and the King disappeared but stars were left in the sky making a pathway over which they had come. We call this pathway of stars, the Milky Way.

The old shepherd told story after story. Then they both pulled their big coats around them and lay down to sleep.

The three friends, Miki and Matyi and Sari, could not sleep. They sat close together talking. They wanted to see things and do things. Matyi confided in Miki that he grew very tired of doing nothing but chasing silly sheep. He said he was tired too of having only left-over soup to eat.

Miki and Matyi tried to keep Sari still. They did not want to wake up the shepherds. But every time Sari talked she hissed. She didn't mean to, but that seemed her natural way of talking.

The old shepherd had often said "Buda-Pest" in his stories. Miki and Matyi and Sari decided that they would find Buda Pest. They would go off very quietly and not wake the sleeping shepherds. One after the other they crept off.

They walked a long way. They were just at the edge of a village. Suddenly Matyi heard something. He stood perfectly still and listened. Miki stopped, for he heard something, too. Finally Sari threw back her head and said, "Shush!"

That was a word she said well.

They walked nearer the sounds and then stopped again and listened.

Miki said, "I know it is music, but I never heard just that kind of music before."

Matyi knew, for he had heard it often. "It is gypsy music," he said.

Miki and Matyi and Sari sat down right where they were and listened. The music was slow and sad and beautiful. Tears dropped from their eyes.

Suddenly the music made them so happy and gay that they all had to jump and laugh and dance. That is what gypsy music makes you do.

They shouted and ran toward the place where the music came from. It was a gypsy camp. They stayed all night with the gypsies, with the gypsy babies with the gypsy dogs and the fierce looking men all about them.

ON THE WAY TO BUDAPEST

ONE of the gypsies told Miki that they were not far from Budapest, so the next morning they started on. Very soon they met an old man who was driving a fat donkey with long ears. The man was sitting in a cart, and the cart only had two wheels. The cart didn't look very strong, but he invited them to ride, and they all piled in. The old man was on his way to Budapest.

It was a long ride and they were hungry. At last they saw a woman coming up the road. On her back she was carrying something big and round, all wrapped up in a white cloth. It was as big as Miki himself.

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As she came up to them, the driver leaned out of the cart, smiled, and asked her something. She unrolled the cloth from the great round bundle she was carrying. She took out a knife and cut off a great slice for each of them. This big thing she had been carrying was a huge round loaf of bread.

Then they felt better and drove on.

BUDAPEST

T LAST they came to the city called Budapest. It really is two cities with a river between them. "Buda" is the name of the city on one side of the river; "Pest" is the name of the city on the other side.

The people who live there often want to go back and forth from one city to the other, so they have built many bridges across the river.

Miki and Matyi and Sari had a wonderful time running back and forth across these bridges. First they were in Buda. Then they ran across to Pest, and then back they went from Pest to Buda.

They ran until Miki was all tired out. He had even worn holes in the soles of his beautiful red boots. Matyi was all out of breath, and his tongue was hanging out. Sari was fine. She could fly when she was tired of running, so she did not feel tired at all.

At the end of one of the bridges they saw a big stone lion and climbed up where he was and sat down beside him.

He was a very big lion, and he was made of stone and he would not talk to Miki.

Miki saw large tears fall from the lion's eyes, so he put his arms around the lion's neck and begged him to tell him what was the matter. Still the lion would not talk. Miki did not know what to do to comfort him.

Matyi said: "I know why he doesn't talk. He can't. He has no tongue." Matyi had heard the shepherds telling about this very lion.

It seems that a man called a sculptor made this lion out of stone and then put him there to guard the bridge, to watch the river, and Buda and Pest.

When the lion was up in his place, the sculptor discovered that he had forgotten something very important. It was most important. The sculptor had made the lion's mouth wide open but he had forgotten to put a tongue in his mouth.

That was hard on the lion but it was too late for the sculptor to do anything to fix it. So the lion just had to make the best of it and there he sits to this day without any tongue.

Miki remembered that he had part of a bag of candy in his pocket. He took out a handful and put it in the lion's mouth. The lion stopped crying and smiled. With the candy in his mouth, no one could see that he had no tongue, and besides, the candy tasted good.

Miki promised to come back and give him more candy when this was all gone.

THE WURSTLI

(This Means the Place Where You Buy Hot Dogs)

AFTER they were rested, Miki and Matyi and Sari started out to find a park. They found it right away, for lots of other people were going there too. The park was called the Wurstli. The very first thing they saw, after they were in the park, was a merry-go-round with prancing spotted horses. There was gay music. Children were waiting for the horses to go slower and slower and then stop, so they could ride. Matyi and Sari hurried right after Miki up to the merry-go-round.

At last the horses stood still, the music stopped, and the barker came up. The barker was a man with a very gruff voice. He wore a sweater all made of stripes of bright colors. He helped the people on and off the merry-go-round and took their money for the ride.

He said that Matyi and Sari could not ride. Miki would not go without them. They talked and talked.

Miki showed the barker that he had money enough for all to ride. Then the barker said they could get on. First he made Matyi promise not to bark while he was riding. Then he talked seriously to Sari, and she promised to sit very still on a horse and not fly around any faster than the merry-go-round went. They each picked out the horse they liked best and climbed up.

They rode for a long, long time.

Three little peasant girls came up for a ride. They were very shy and scared, for they had never seen a merry-go-round before. The first girl's name was Katushka, the one in the middle was Ilonka, and the third one was Mariska.

The barker came up to them. They were too shy to look up, but when he saw that they were pretty and that they each had pennies he let them ride.

They all wanted to sit together on the same horse. There wasn't room for all—but they *would* sit on one horse. Katushka sat first, so she could hang onto the post that held the horse in his place. Ilonka sat next. She hung on to Katushka. Poor Mariska was crowded way onto the horse's tail, with her hands holding on tight to Ilonka.

The music started. Slowly the horses pranced off, around and around—fast, then faster and faster. Mariska hung on as long as she could. Then off she tumbled, right down in the grass. Her skirts made her look like a bright-colored balloon as she fell.

When Miki saw Mariska fall, he jumped off his horse. Matyi barked and jumped down, too. Sari screamed, so the barker put her off. They picked Mariska up and helped her brush the dust from her pretty clothes and straighten her kerchief.

Just then her father came up. He looked so big and fierce, that Miki was a little scared of him, but Ilonka ran right up to him.

In the picture you can see how her father looked.

The big cape he has on is made of long woolly sheepskin on one side. He has only one coat and wears it whether it is hot or cold. When it is cold he puts the cape on with the warm furry side next to him. When he is too warm, he takes off the cape, turns the woolly side outside, and wears it that way. Then he feels cooler.

After Miki talked with him, he decided that Mariska's father was really not a fierce man—only looked so; and when Mariska asked Miki and his friends to go home with them, they went gladly.

THE POPPY SEED STRUDEL

THEY had the best things to eat at Mariska's house. Mariska's mother made wonderful things. She cooked all day long, and all the other women in the house helped her.

One day Miki watched her take a little ball of dough and spread it and pat it out on the table top. She pulled it and patted it and pulled it some more. First she stood on one side of the table and pulled, and then she stood on the other side of the table and pulled. That

little ball of dough spread farther and farther and got thinner and thinner. At last it was as thin as a piece of paper. It covered the whole table top and hung way down on each side.

The Mother went to get the poppy seeds she was going to roll up in this thin sheet of dough. Miki stood still and watched. He wanted so much to poke his finger through that dough all hanging down like a piece of tissue paper.

All of a sudden he saw a little hole in it. The hole grew larger. He saw a black shiny eye and a yellow bill. And then right through the hole came Sari's head. She had been sitting quietly under the table where no one had noticed her. Miki said, "Run, Sari run!" and Sari half ran and half flew right out of the kitchen door, dragging a great piece of the strudel dough with her—like a long white nightgown.

She was all tangled up in it. Sticky dough all over her feathers. I tell you she felt ashamed. She couldn't pick all the pieces of the dough off for days. Sari never went near the kitchen again.

When Mariska's mother came back with the poppy seeds she had to laugh at Sari. Then she sprinkled poppy seeds on the dough that was left, and then she rolled it up tight and baked it in the oven. When it was done she gave Miki a piece, and he thought he had never tasted better cake in his life.

CHRISTMAS

MIKI and Matyi and Sari stayed at Mariska's house until it was nearly Christmas. The week before Christmas they were very busy. They took some little chunks of wood and with a knife they cut out figures. Some they made to look like people and some like animals.

Miki cut out sheep. This was very hard to do. One of the figures they called Joseph and another Mary. One was a tiny little figure of a baby. This was The Christ Child. This was the hardest figure to make and they worked a long time to make it very, very nice. Miki built a manger for the tiny little Christ to lie in.

After they had finished they took some paint and made eyes and a nose and a mouth on each figure. Then the children wanted to build a little church. Mariska's father helped them to put a steeple on the church and cut windows in the side. The front was left open. He fastened two short poles together like a stretcher so that the children could carry the church about on it. They put the figures they had made inside the church.

Christmas Eve came. Miki put on a long beard made of white cotton. He played that he was an old shepherd. Mariska's father gave him a real shepherd's crook to carry. Mariska wrapped a lovely kerchief over her head and a shawl about her shoulders. She was Mary. Her three brothers each put on a crown made of gold paper. They were the Three Wise Men. They told Matyi to pretend that he was a woolly sheep.

Just as it became quite dark they put a lighted candle inside the little church. The old shepherd and the Three Wise Men each took hold of the poles on which the little church stood and started to go from house to house with it. Mary walked first and carried a lighted candle.

They went from one house to another. The family in each house gathered close around the little church to look at it. Then the little children sang Christmas songs. Miki played that he was a shepherd watching for

the star. The Three Wise Men played that they came bringing gifts to the baby Christ. After this they carefully lifted up the little church and went to the next house. In one house the children were given apples, and in one sticks of candy, and in another toffy and cakes.

Then they all went back to Mariska's house and hung up their stockings for St. Nicholas to fill.

THIS IS THE LAST STORY

ONE day a letter came to Miki. In it were three pieces of colored paper with much printing on them. They were tickets. These tickets would take them to Miki's home. One was for Miki, one for Sari, and one for Matyi.

They collected some presents to take home with them—a big bag of paprika, a long round roll of cake filled with poppy seeds, and some other little things.

Miki bought a new suit. He picked out the one with the most embroidery and with the most red and pink color. When he was dressed up in it he looked very fine. Matyi had his curls all brushed, and Sari put on a beautiful new kerchief.

Then they took the tickets and all went back home to Miki's house.

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